

## **PIT Buyback Update January 2006**

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As I mentioned in my letter to all applicants dated December 1, 2005, the Office of Personnel Management has now issued guidance that will allow us to start forwarding your applications to the Retirement Accounts Division in Charleston for further processing. The Office of Retirement is responsible for determining whether your service meets all the requirements of the PIT buyback program, and the Retirement Accounts Division will calculate the amount of the deposit, plus interest, you would owe to purchase credit toward retirement for your service.

Applicants who were eligible family members and who served in part-time, intermittent or temporary (PIT) appointments at U.S. missions overseas between January 1, 1989 and May 23, 1998 may apply to obtain credit toward retirement under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) even if they are no longer working for the Federal Government and even if they are already drawing retirement benefits. If an individual who performed this type of service has died, anyone who is eligible for a survivor annuity under FERS based on the service of that individual may apply to obtain FERS credit for that service.

Individuals who wish to obtain FERS credit for their service need to complete a regular application for service credit on Standard Form 3108. In completing the SF 3108 applicants should list in box 10 of Part A only the periods of government service performed abroad that they seek to credit. The total amount of service listed must equal 90 days or more.

**In addition to completing the SF 3108, individuals seeking credit for their service in a PIT position abroad during this period need to prepare a cover letter.** The cover letter should identify the applicant as either the person who performed the service or the survivor of a person who performed the service. The cover letter should indicate if the applicant is an employee, a former employee, or an annuitant. If the applicant is a survivor, the cover letter should include identifying information on the individual who performed the service and should indicate whether the survivor is currently receiving a survivor annuity. We will attach to this letter samples of cover letters from OPM showing the kinds of information individuals should include in their cover letters.

We will address other issues in future letters to applicants. These include documentation of your status as an eligible family member, applications by individuals who no longer work for the Department of State or who were employed as PITs by agencies other than the Department of State and applications by former PIT employees of the U.S. Information Agency. We will also discuss limitations on the definition of U.S. missions abroad. Finally, we will explain appeal procedures if you do not agree with a decision by the Office of Retirement regarding crediting your service toward retirement.

Thank you for your patience as we work to establish this very complex program.

From David B. Dhoully  
Administrator, Foreign Service Retirement and Disability Fund  
Director, Office of Retirement HR/RET